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The Motion Picture

SOME facts about an American institution with which some of us are not as familiar as its importance in our daily lives may warrant.

By
CHARLES C. PETTIJOHN

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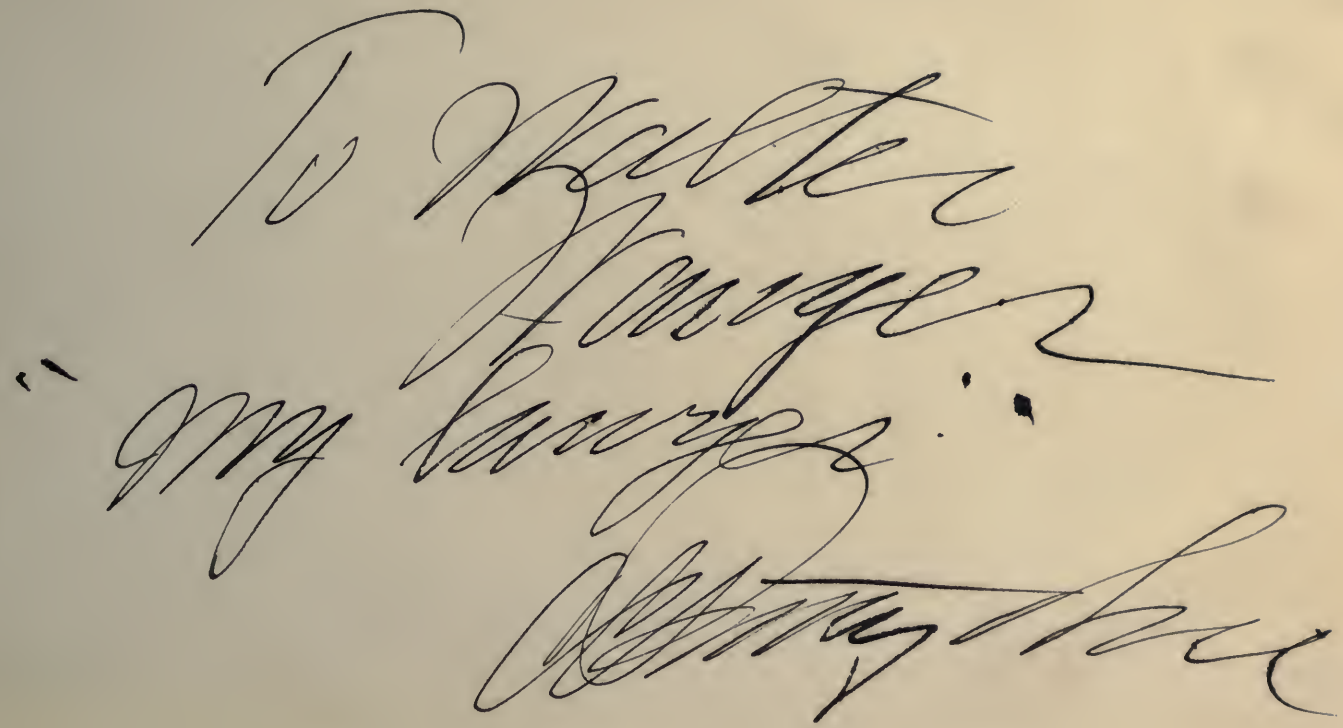


The Motion Picture—

SOME facts about an American institution with which some of us are not so familiar as its importance in our daily lives may warrant.

by

CHARLES C. PETTIJOHN

TO that splendid group of women who, through the organization and functioning of the

INDIANA INDORSERS
OF PHOTOPLAYS,

have visualized the motion picture's limitless possibilities for good—

This Little Volume is Dedicated

America's Most Distinctive Product

Of the world's land the United States possesses 6%

Of the world's population our people make up 7%

Of the world's wheat we grow 27%

Of the world's silver our mines produce..... 30%

Of the world's coal we dig 40%

Of the world's steel, copper and aluminum the United States produces 50%

Of the world's cotton we grow 60%

Of the world's telephones we use 63%

Of the world's petroleum oil there comes from our wells 65%

Of the world's corn we grow 75%

Of the world's automobiles we make more than 80%

Of the world's motion pictures we produce more than 85%

The Motion Picture

THE motion picture is a vital part of the everyday lives of all the people of America and it is becoming more and more an important part in the lives of the other peoples of the world.

We are so used to pictures, so accustomed to our occasional dropping in to a theatre for a couple of hours of relaxation and entertainment, that we accept this form of diversion just as we accept the postal service, the transportation service, the telephone and telegraph—things which are firmly, and possibly irreplaceably, established in our mode of living.

Rarely do we think of what lies back of these things; the railroads, the street cars, the telephones, the telegraph and especially the motion picture. They are there when we want it, and that is our chief concern.

A Truly American Product

Much has been said and much has been written about the limitless possibilities of the motion picture as a means of entertainment and enlightenment. And again there have been countless words spoken and printed about it as a moral factor and as an influence upon our ideas and customs. But the actual physical immensity of the motion picture, which a few years ago was a mere toy, is really startling.

The product which America gives to the world in greatest volume is the MOTION PICTURE.

More than 85% of the photoplays shown throughout civilization, and indeed in many places which are barely civilized, come from the studios of the producers of the United States. The percentage, as a matter of fact, is really nearer to 90 than to 85. In the frozen regions of the North, in the most remote communities of the far South, from the easternmost to the westernmost points where humanity dwells, American pictures go and are shown.

And the motion picture itself is an American-developed product.

Edison and Eastman—Great Americans

Truly enough, the basic idea is not American and is not new. Ages ago man discovered that a series of drawings of an object in different positions would, when passed rapidly before the eye, give the illusion of movement. The Chinese are said to have known this some 3,000 years ago. Europeans within our own time conducted serious experimentations with this idea, before it was taken up here.

But it remained for two Americans, both living, both active, both citizens of whom the nation is proud, to bring about the picture in motion as we know it today.

Thomas A. Edison in 1888 made practical a camera which was capable of taking a great number of photographs in rapid succession. Its only difficulty was that Mr. Edison had no suitable substance upon which

the images got by his lens could be recorded. He perfected a camera, nothing more.

George Eastman in that same year, unknown to Mr. Edison, was working upon a device which was to solve the problem—a flexible ribbon of celluloid coated with sensitive emulsion. This was for use in his Kodak camera, which took pictures of the type we now call "still," to differentiate them from motion pictures.

Combination of Genius Successful

Mr. Eastman knew nothing of motion pictures. He had no interest in them. He did not even know that Mr. Edison was working on a camera to take them. But when the flexible celluloid ribbon was an accomplished fact, word of it reached out from Rochester, N. Y., and came to the attention of Mr. Edison. The two men got together, the combination of inventions was found to harmonize; and then and there was the beginning of this great industry which now carries the name of America to all ends of the earth.

Fifty-odd millions of Americans—a number almost equal to one-half of our entire population—each week visit 15,000 theatres, great and small, to look at pictures in motion—"the movies," as they are expressively and fondly called.

Not that many persons are regular readers of books or newspapers or regular attendants at lecture forums or at the type of theatre where the spoken drama prevails.

What Is the Truth About Pictures?

Must it not be, then, that motion pictures are a great part of our national life? Indeed, they are one of the greatest parts, for they are viewed by young and old, rich and poor, illiterate and intelligent. They are unquestionably the most democratic of all our institutions.

What then is the truth about motion pictures and those who make them? Are they improving? Are they retrograding? Are they accomplishing good? Are they doing evil? What are their possibilities, their problems?

Like everything that is new, motion pictures have been the subject of bitter attack. So virulent at times has been the criticism and the enmity of the attackers—generally the misinformed—that motion pictures might have perished long ago, had they been less firmly entrenched in the hearts and minds of the American people.

They were placed in the category of targets at which anyone might raise his gun and blaze away. The fusillade is not so noisy now, but we still hear the pop-pop of that same question, "What's Wrong with our Motion Pictures?"

Pictures Please Many Millions

The answer to that question, by the thoughtful, is: "There's nothing much wrong with them, for if there was, it is scarcely likely that every week 50,000,000 people would patronize the picture houses and

would come out of them smiling and satisfied, saying to each other 'When shall we go again?' It is scarcely likely that scores of millions of dollars would be invested in beautiful theatres devoted exclusively to the showing of pictures, if they were, in the main, evil now or likely to be more evil than good in the future."

Any attack upon motion pictures, however, cannot be more than a passing thing. Everything new suffers attack. Every science or art in its early days is criticized. So with pictures in motion.

Long ago it was regarded as a sinful act to disseminate the printed word in any form among the humbler people, who were supposed to remain in the niche of life "in which God placed them." The bicycle and then the automobile were pronounced "agencies of the devil for the ruination of our youth."

All Industries Had "Problems"

Riding on railroads was regarded as so evil that the use of public school houses for a discussion of "the railroad problem" was prohibited with proclamations that "such things as railroads are impossibilities and rank infidelity." "If God had designed that his intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of 15 miles an hour by steam, he would clearly have foretold it through his holy prophets." (This is an actual extract from a letter signed by the school board of Lancaster, Ohio, to F. V. Force, of Gilman, Ohio, in 1826.)

Medical men declared bath-tubs a menace to health. In 1843 Philadelphia tried to prohibit bathing between November 1 and March 15 by ordinance; in 1845 Boston made bathing unlawful except when prescribed by a physician; and at the same time Virginia placed a tax of $30 a year on every bath-tub.

Press Was Attacked in Old Days

The press has arrived at its present position of stability only after six centuries of development. What John Milton did in the fight for the freedom of the press; what Benjamin Franklin did and Horace Greely, Charles A. Dana, Joseph Pulitzer, Henry Watterson and the other heroic figures of journalism did to establish the press as we now know it—all this is expected to be done by the motion picture industry in scarcely more than a score of years.

Valiant efforts have been made—and are being made right now—to establish and maintain the highest possible standards in motion pictures.

If there were no other responsibility placed upon those who produce and distribute the films than that of having in their hands the most typical product of all American products, surely there is responsibility enough right here. This responsibility is appreciated to the full.

Different From Other Businesses

A condition exists in the motion picture industry which does not exist in any other American enterprise: This business, which in a mere handful of years has developed from nothing at all until today when it is perhaps the most typical of all American businesses, is still for the most part in the hands and under the control of those who originated it.

Many of those who a few years ago began the showing of pictures in tiny halls and stores where the seats were camp stools—and frequently borrowed from the friendly undertaker of the neighborhood—are now the proprietors of immense and beautiful theatres which are actually civic monuments in their communities. The jerky little screen exhibitions, which in those days ran perhaps ten or fifteen minutes, have given way to splendid artistic photoplays filled with beauty and dramatic action, with historical fact and delightful imaginative fancy, and providing an hour and a half or two hours of really worthwhile entertainment.

Picture Pioneers Still Active

The men who have lived through this development are still with us. They have been responsible for the development and they know that in the years to come the importance and the popularity of this form of diversion will be as far in advance of today as today is in advance of two or three decades ago.

They have nothing to apologize for. They have no reason to be ashamed of the work they are engaged in or of the quality of their present product. On the contrary, they have every right to be proud of what they have accomplished and hopeful of what they will accomplish in the future.

It is no small thing to have brought joy into the lives of untold millions of fellowmen. In this country alone, the 50,000,000 people a week who spend a couple of hours in motion picture theatres are lifted out of the dull routine of their everyday lives and receive information —and inspiration if you will—from the lives of others which they see being unrolled before them on the screen.

World Brought to Picture Theatres

They see foreign lands which they never will or could visit in reality. They see the great people of the world whom they would never have an opportunity to view in the actual flesh. They feel the grip of romance, the thrill of great historical action. Healthy tears mingle with healthy laughter as they follow the adventures of ordinary men and women, who might well be themselves. And all this of course is within the reach of everyone and the means of everyone, whether he be a dweller in one of the great cities or a part of some tiny community at remote cross-roads.

Those men whose time, whose money, whose brains and whose effort are devoted to the making of motion pictures are well aware of all

these things. From whatever viewpoint you may choose—that of the moral responsibility, their responsibility as educators, or their responsibility commercially to themselves and their stockholders—their natural inclination is to go constantly forward, to make better pictures, to make cleaner pictures, to make pictures in which there shall be more educational and inspirational qualities as well as more entertainment.

Improvement Has Been Constant

There never has been any slipping back in the quality of the motion pictures these men have turned out. Year after year the pictures have been cleaner and finer, more artistic and more beautiful. A few years ago it was a rather rare thing for any motion picture to be hailed as truly great. Only in half decades did we have a photoplay of the quality of "The Birth of a Nation" or "The Miracle Man." But nowadays not a month passes—scarcely a week goes by—without the showing of some picture which is hailed as a truly great piece of artistry as well as of entertainment. And many of these go far beyond the mere element of entertainment. They are historical documents, capable of teaching far more clearly and in a manner which will remain far longer in the memory, the great accomplishments of our forebears who took part in the advancement of our own and other countries.

But in all history there is drama. Possibly the finest, most appealing sort of drama; and more and more in recent years there has been a tendency to reproduce this in pictorial form.

Great Pictures Now on View

There are some splendid examples of just this sort of photoplay now showing upon our screens. Nothing could be finer, for example, than "The Covered Wagon," that photographic narrative of the adventures of those pioneers who in the late 40's journeyed from the mid-West to the far Pacific Coast with their wagon trains drawn by horses and oxen, facing starvation and savage, toiling across the desert and over mountains, venturing their all, indeed, venturing their very lives for the sake of developing a new and virginal part of our country.

No dull history lesson is this. Those pioneers had in their own company comedy and tragedy, loves and hates, births and deaths, as they moved ever Westward. No fictional adventures could have been more thrilling, more gripping than those of this brave band; and with historical fidelity and accuracy the film has recorded and perpetuated these.

That is but one of the great stories of American history which recently have found their way to the screen.

Our Forefathers' Work Perpetuated

Another is "The Iron Horse," the equally enthralling story of the spanning of the continent by the rails over which now we travel swiftly and even luxuriously. Here, too, were companies of wonderful adventurers, men who faced hazard and privation as they advanced from the

middle West and from the Pacific Coast, laying tie by tie and spike by spike, tracks over what had been trackless wilds.

Savages making last stands against the encroachments of civilization fought these toilers as they worked. A man laid down his spike hammer, took up his rifle and fought for his life. The fight over, he laid down the rifle and took up again his sledge and went on again with his work of binding ocean to ocean with a link of iron, as these intrepid toilers made their way by a handful of miles a day. They loved and hated, they fought and fraternized—but ever they kept on until the great task was accomplished. And this story of a date only a few years later than that of the pioneers and their wagons has likewise been told by the film in a form that is imperishable.

Lincoln's Life a Screen Masterpiece

Still another great and epic tale that the film has told is that of the dramatic life of him who perhaps is acknowledged as the greatest of Americans—the martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, who was a young lawyer in Illinois when the wagon train adventurers set forth on their long journey and who was our chief executive in Washington when the railroad builders were performing their magnificent service.

In the life of Lincoln there was all the thrill, all the romance, all the comedy and tragedy that a great masterpiece of fiction might contain. It was truly dramatic throughout.

Far more impressive than any printed or spoken word is the picture we see of the rude log cabin, swept by a blizzard, in which the child Lincoln was born. And far more effective and memory-holding than any printed or spoken history is the pictorial representation we see of him as a tall, gangling youth conquering the town bully, shy and diffident in the presence of the town girls; and later as a rising young lawyer engaged in politics, besting the country's greatest debater on an open-air forum, then being nominated and elected to the presidency with the idea ever in his mind of abolishing that thing which to us today is almost unbelievable, the holding in slavery of one group of men by another group of men.

Pictures the Best History-Teachers

We become far more intimate with Lincoln in his tragic courtship of the beautiful Anne Rutledge, in his personal contacts with his soldiers during the Civil War, in his home life and in the passing of his boy Tad—we see all these things much more clearly in motion pictures than we could in any other form of history. We see his slaying, his passing as he is surrounded by his Cabinet and we appreciate more fully than we have ever before the significance of Stanton's words, "Now he belongs to the ages."

These are only three of the great achievements of the motion picture industry in recent times, but it might be pointed out that these three pictures were conceived and produced within a period of less than two years.

We have seen in semi-fictive form on the screen the ride of Paul Revere, the gathering of the farmer forces at Concord, the early battles of the war which made us a free and independent nation. These things in one current picture, "America." In another, "Janice Meredith," we view the crossing of the Delaware by Washington and his faithful army of half-starved patriots, we see their suffering in the snowy fields of Valley Forge, and we are thrilled and inspired by the love of justice and freedom which carried these men—early forbears of our own—to eventual triumph.

The World's Struggles Portrayed

We have seen in various semi-historical photoplays the struggles of other peoples—of the English and French for example—to achieve the rights and privileges which they now enjoy.

It is perhaps not a boast to say that more history is being taught or at least a greater interest in history is being inculcated by means of the motion picture now than by means of all the history books of the past.

But motion pictures cannot all be historical. They cannot all be educational. Were these elements the dominating ones in every photoplay, our film entertainment would inevitably become monotonous. Motion pictures—indeed the majority of motion pictures—must be produced with nothing in view but the simple idea of entertainment. The greatest number now are produced with only that element in view and so it will be always.

But here again the motion picture industry can point with pride to its achievements. Not all pictures can be expected to be thoroughly high-class any more than all novels, stage-plays, magazine stories or newspaper articles can be expected to be high-class. There will always perhaps be some stupid motion pictures. There may be from time to time errors of judgment on the part of those who write or those who produce.

Films Cleanest of Entertainment

But it may fairly be contended now that the percentage of stupid and unwholesome pictures is infinitely smaller than it has been in the past and every effort is being made toward the end that such pictures will be fewer and fewer in the future.

It is beyond doubt a fact that the film of today, taken as a whole, is cleaner and more entertaining than the novel or stage-play of today. And it is cleaner and more wholesome than those other mediums of expression because *the picture makers themselves, realizing all their responsibilities, have insisted among themselves that it must be so.*

It might be argued, and perhaps with a certain degree of justification, that the motion picture screen should be as free a medium of expression as the book, the stage or the daily journal. But those engaged more intimately in the making and showing of motion pictures have

refrained for reasons of their own—and highly creditable reasons—from advancing that contention. They have achieved a state of mind in regard to motion pictures which is deserving of the highest praise.

Producers Realize Responsibilities

They look at the situation in this fashion—that they have a greater degree of responsibility for the effect that their product will have upon the minds of those who view it than have either the novelist or the dramatist. The man who publishes a book or the man who produces a stage-play has more or less a limited group to appeal to. Not everyone can or will pay $2 for a novel. Not everyone can or will pay that much or more to attend a dramatic performance. But everyone can—and nearly everyone does—pay the small price that grants admittance to the motion picture theatre.

Those who buy books and those who go to plays have a pretty definite idea of what they are going to read or hear. And there is more or less of a grading in books and in plays. When you buy a book by a certain author, you have at least a general idea of what it is about and of what sort of psychology is going to be offered to you. And this is similarly the case with the stage. Here, too, you have a fair idea of the sort of play a certain individual writes or a certain individual produces.

The book stalls and the dramatic theatres appeal, it might fairly be said, to the "sophisticates."

Every Class Must Be Regarded

But this is not the case by any means with motion pictures. They have a following infinitely more numerous than that of the novel or the dramatic offering. A book is a great success if, in its final printing, it has reached 100,000 copies. Yet a motion picture, were it distributed throughout the country during any given week, would be seen by nearly 600 times that number of persons.

And the motion picture is not graded as to class or type. Some day perhaps it may be. At present there are pictures which appeal powerfully to the "sophisticates" who have been mentioned, and yet fail of appreciation by others. Some pictures again achieve great popularity among the masses which do not bear the badge of sophistication, and yet are regarded as stupid and futile things by those who pride themselves upon being perhaps a step in advance of the procession of thought, of morals and of conventions.

But both sorts of pictures must be offered to both sorts of people. Because of this very lack of classification which those who make and show motion pictures labor under a peculiar handicap. A picture cannot be made—at least with commercial success—which has its appeal solely to the "above-the-ordinary" intellect.

Tastes in Pictures Varies Greatly

There are innumerable motion picture patrons who do not want that sort of thing and possibly would not appreciate it were it given to them. Yet the sophisticated patrons must be encouraged because they are the sort who frequently stand aside with an attitude of aloofness and proclaim themselves as scornful of the motion picture because of its lack of intellectuality. The patronage of the sophisticates—the intellectuals if you will—is both wanted and needed by the motion picture industry.

There is a tendency today in literature and drama to base many novels and plays upon themes having to do for the most part with sex, with irreligion, or with defiance of the customs and conventions under which the world has operated for so many ages. This is regarded as the "smart" stuff, the "clever" stuff, the "advance" of literature and the drama. A considerable proportion of our best selling books and our largest attended plays are thematically of that type. As said before, those of the motion picture business might contend with a degree of fairness that they have the right to show that sort of thing just as the author or the dramatist or the newspaper publisher shows it. But they do not and will not assume that attitude.

Support Good Pictures!

They believe there are enough historical narratives to be portrayed, enough clean and wholesome works of past or present writers to be picturized, enough simple, human stories of ordinary folks like ourselves that might be filmed, after having been written by those of our own generation, to fill all the needs of the screen without seeking after the ultra-sensational, the too unconventional or the extremely daring.

There is a constant—and entirely proper—demand on the part of the public for "good pictures," "better pictures!" There is one unfailing way to get good pictures. It is very simple. Support those good pictures which are already in existence! There are scores of them, hundreds of them. They far outnumber the bad pictures and the percentage by which fine, clean pictures dominate is constantly increasing. But the public must do its part—you, each individual, must do your part. It is all very well to say we want better pictures, but unless you express your desire in a practical way, your expresion is of utterly no value.

Destructive Criticism Is Valueless

Getting up in club meetings and denonuncing bad pictures will not accomplish a thing. Letters about bad pictures, articles about bad pictures, sermons about bad pictures are all equally valueless—just as all destructive criticism inevitably must be valueless. The sure way, the quick way, the way that cannot fail, is to patronize those pictures which already exist and unquestionably are good. By patronize is meant go to

see them, pay your money at the box-office, make them financially successful.

Here is what will happen: The theatre owner of your community will find that he has had a prosperous day or a prosperous week. He will say to the producers, "I must have more pictures like that last one. I made money with it and it pleased my patrons. That's the kind of picture I want." The producer, whose business is to rent his pictures to the theatre owner, is bound to heed such a request. He says to his scenario chiefs, to his directors, "We must have more pictures like that one that we just turned out. It pleases the theatre owner because it pleases his folks and shows him a good profit. There is a popular demand for that kind of a picture. Let's go ahead and fill it."

Fine Pictures Sometimes Unprofitable

Once this sort of movement gets under way, it results inevitably in clean, high-class pictures being turned out and being shown. But they must be patronized and be made commercially successful.

It is a sad fact, however, that pictures of this type have frequently failed of success because of the lack of patronage of the very type of man and woman that constantly complains about bad pictures or stupid pictures and demands better ones.

Long ago the producers attempted to accede to this demand—only to meet with discouragement. Some very fine pictures have been offered and have not met with success. There need be no hesitation in naming some of these. "Peter Ibbetson," a beautiful story, beautifully made and including in its cast two extremely popular stars of their day—Wallace Reid and Elsie Ferguson—was not a commercial success. Neither was "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," although the man conceded to be America's best actor, John Barrymore, portrayed the dual role. Neither was Sir James Barrie's "Sentimental Tommy." More recently, the public failed to appreciate the "Courtship of Miles Standish," although it depicted splendidly the era of the Mayflower's voyagers. "The Dramatic Life of Abraham Lincoln," perhaps the most historically accurate and painstakingly made picture in the history of the industry, met with a very poor reception in the early days of its showing, although now it is going on to a well-deserved success.

Producers Withstood Temptation

Picture producers are very human persons. If they offer the sort of stories mentioned and you fail to go to see them, where does the fault lie? Certainly not with them. It would be perhaps altogether justifiable for the producers to say, "Well, the people don't want those good clean pictures after all. Let's give them the sex stuff, the lurid sensational stuff. That's what they seem to care for, because the theatres showing that sort of stuff are crowded."

But to the great credit of the producers, they have not taken that attitude. They have been patient. They have felt that an increasing popular realization of their problems was bound to come—and it has

come. But there is still a great lot of work to be done to bring about a constantly increasing stream of better pictures—and that work rests with you.

You might ask, of course, "How am I to know that a picture is good so that I can support it?" How do you know, when you are about to buy, for example, a supply of flour, that you are going to get good flour? You probably have learned that a certain brand suits your requirements and that you will invariably get good flour, at least that which seems good to you, when you order that brand. The same is very likely true of the shoes you wear or the hats or clothes you buy. You may prefer one brand; your neighbor may prefer another. Each of you is satisfied and pleased and the brand name is fixed permanently in your mind when a certain requirement is to be met.

Learn to Know Good Pictures

Of course motion pictures are not and cannot be a stabilized product. Every single one must differ. It is a mighty uncertain and hazardous thing—this making of motion pictures—on the part of any maker of them. Therefore, it is not quite possible to be assured beyond question that when you see a picture bearing the trademark of a certain company you are without fail seeing a perfect picture. But there are certain companies whose names stand for the sincerest kind of endeavor to provide for you entertainment that is interesting and artistic and clean.

Familiarize yourself with the name of the producing organization as well as the names of the players who perform in the film drama you are seeing. As you know, in the descriptive matter which is unrolled upon the screen before the action of the piece begins, there is always set forth the name of the producing company, the writer, the director, etc.

Choose Your Pictures Carefully

The name of the company likewise is invariably shown upon the billboards and upon the printed programs you receive in the theatre. Keep this name in mind. You will soon discover that such and such company's product is more likely to please you than the product of such and such another company. Then, in choosing your next screen entertainment, watch for this part of the announcement of the forthcoming attraction. You will have to remember more than one name, of course. There are a number of producing companies which make good pictures.

There are certain players, both men and women, who invariably appear in nothing but the very best of photoplays. They are intelligent, thoughtful persons, proud of the work in which they are engagad and they would not—even were the producers foolish enough to suggest this—appear in anything except the most wholesome and most genuinely interesting sort of offerings.

Those who patronize motion picture theatres constantly soon become familiar with the personnel of the leading players and soon will learn if they pay attention to the forthcoming attractions that when one

of these players is billed, a thoroughly good entertainment is almost invariably a prospect.

Still another way that might be suggested is to observe the name of the author of the photo-drama. Some of our most distinguished American novelists and playwrights are engaged in writing directly for the screen and you may be sure that the stories they turn out will not be stupid nor suggestive, nor anything but high-class.

"Go Shopping" For Good Pictures

Look, therefore, for the name of the producer, of the author, and of the player. To put it very plainly, "shop around" for your picture.

In most places motion picture theatres are fairly numerous. If you are dubious about what is being presented at the first theatre you reach, walk on a few blocks and try another one. If the second one has what seems to be a better offering, it is deserving of your patronage, even if it is not the nearest one to your home. And here is another fact which may be helpful in your support of the good pictures! Certain theatre owners maintain higher standards of presentation than others. In their theatres it is likely that almost always you will see the best pictures it has been possible for the owner to obtain. Familiarize yourselves with the names and locations of these theatres. This is simply another example of "shopping around."

Pictures and Our Children

Whenever motion pictures are discussed, one question invariably arises: "What about motion pictures and our children?" That is a matter which is distinctly up to you. The responsibility is upon you parents, you guardians, you teachers, not the police force.

It is true now and it always will be true that there are certain pictures which perhaps are not the sort of things which children should see. It might as well be stated very frankly that the time will never come when all pictures will be fitted for the adolescent mind. If that time did come, the grown-ups would not patronize the motion picture theatre, and if the theatre had to rely for its maintenance upon the patronage of children, it would soon pass out of existence.

There are pictures, yes many pictures, which children should not see. Likewise, there are many novels, many plays and even many newspapers to which they should not have access. Parents do not take their children to stage offerings which are intended solely for mature persons. They do not place in their children's hands novels which have for their themes the problems of the grown-up. They do not, if they are careful parents, allow their immature sons and daughters to read those daily journals which specialize in crime and scandal.

Responsibility Rests With Guardians

There is no reason, then, why parents and guardians and teachers should not exercise a supervision over their children's attendance upon motion pictures.

This is distinctly up to the parent. Such supervision, it must be admitted, is not an easy matter. But the difficulty of the task does not lessen our responsibility. We can at least learn from our children the frequency of their attendance upon motion pictures, and the type of

pictures they care best to see, rather than sit by in idle ignorance of their habits in this regard.

Here and there efforts have been made to shift this burden on to the State. In New York, no child under 16 can enter without the admission of an escort; in Massachusetts, no child under 14; in Pennsylvania, no child under 14; in Rhode Island and Connecticut, no girl under 16 or boy under 14. But this plan has not worked out. It is easy for a child under the legal age limit to hail a good-natured adult and hand over a coin and say: "Take me in, Mister?" or "Take me in, Lady?" It has been easy again for the youngsters to misrepresent their ages.

We Should Not Shirk Duty

And such a shifting of responsibility to the State is a definite shirking of our own duty, just as censorship is a shirking of our duty by placing the responsibility for the kind of pictures we see in the hands of a few political appointees. There is too much of a tendency to delegate to policemen fireside duties and parental care.

The following is from an address of Judge Ben B. Lindsey of Denver, founder of Children's Courts in this country, and distinguished authority on child welfare and delinquency:

"We must have a parenthood in this country that first learns what evil is and knows best how to teach the child to fight it, to overcome it. A parenthood that shall come to know that the child's greatest safeguard against evil is not so much by censorship, by a policeman with a club on every corner to direct what he sees, hears or does—a new system of wet-nursism from the day he is born until he becomes the adult man or woman—but by the simpler expedient, through companionship, spiritual training, education, ideals and confidence that will educate the child as to what evil is, where it lurks, and what he must do to avoid it.

Morality Cannot Be Legislated

"I hope I may help to open your eyes to the truth that we are getting nowhere through this habit we are drifting into of making some one thing 'the goat' for our faults, and expecting to cure them altogether by trying to legislate morality into people, and falling into the seemingly easy method of thinking we are going to protect them against evil through some censor's club instead of their own."

Judge Lindsey uses plain words, but he is entirely right. The duty is the parents', not the State's nor the motion picture producers'.

The Committee on Public Relations — an organization whose functions shall be described later — in an effort to be of aid to parents and other custodians of children, has inaugurated a plan of having Saturday morning performances for young people only. These are given for a nominal admission of ten cents, and are in operation in several score cities and towns. They have had successful results. Carefully selected programs have been shown, which pleased the children; and then the youngsters, having been entertained in this fashion, did not demand on other days of the week to be shown pictures intended for the more mature.

From time to time there is much talk about "the problem of the motion picture." The motion picture has its own problems—some of them have been instanced here—the temptation, which has been resisted, to picturize some of the literary and dramatic offerings of the

day; the temptation to use daring or sensational titles; the question which has just been dealt with, that of the child.

But the motion picture itself, taken as a whole, is not a problem. It is an accomplishment—and one of the most wonderful accomplishments the world has ever known and we are proud that it is almost entirely an American accomplishment. It has made its mistakes, yes, but they have been errors of judgment, not of intent.

Mistakes Caused By Haste

The very over-night growth of the thing, the rapidity with which it has developed, has been responsible for what mistakes have been made. Unquestionably the good resulting from the invention and development of this form of entertainment is ten thousand times as great as the harm which perhaps has been done by its occasional errors.

It has—no one will dispute—brought genuine happiness to humanity as it has spread to the ends of the earth. Do we realize to what geographical extremes it has spread? We heard only a short time ago the story of Donald McMillan, the Arctic explorer, who told us how the Eskimos enjoyed their movies in the perpetual night which descended upon them in the Frozen North.

Recently Harold Stegall, a Presbyterian missionary to the Belgian Congo, told how his occasional showing of motion pictures to the primitive people in the interior of that region turned out to be events which hundreds and even thousands of savages—some of them indeed still cannibals—attended. He returned to Africa a few months ago, taking with him some two hundred reels of film donated by the leaders of the motion picture interests. One-half of these were educational subjects, showing civilized methods of life, and the other half were the most uproarious comedies Mr. Stegall could find.

Cannibals Enjoy Comedies

He told how he puts up a canvas sheet in a clearing in the wilderness and how the natives sit by hundreds in front of this and in back of it. Of course, for those sitting in back, the lettering of the titles is reversed, but that makes no difference, since they are unable to read anyhow. They laugh as delightedly at the slap-stick antics of our screen comedians as do any of our American audiences, which shows, of course, that human nature is alike the world over.

These are two extreme examples of the spread of the motion pictures. Of course any country in the world, and indeed almost any city in the world, making any pretentions to civilization, has its motion picture theatres.

In ways that we seldom, if ever, think of, pictures are doing good to humanity. Mr. Henry Ford pointed out one of these ways. A vital necessity for our country, he said, is to keep sufficient men back on our farms to produce the food necessary for our sustenance. In recent years there has been a decided drift away from the farms and into the towns and cities on the part of the young men who should be the next generation of food producers. Life on the farm was too dull, too monotonous; it presented no opportunity for entertainment or diversion.

Then came three elements which were of great value, Mr. Ford said, in checking this drift—the cheap automobile, the good road over which it might travel from the farm to the nearest town, and the movie house in that town where the boys and girls could find an evening's entertainment. Not only the boys and girls, but the whole family could enjoy themselves. The radio has been an asset in this direction, too, but it was the motion picture that first provided, in its way, an incentive to continue life in the remote places.

Serious students of community conditions point out another value that lies in motion pictures—the local picture theatre provides a common meeting place at which the residents of the small town see each other and exchange greetings and views in a brotherhood of lightheartedness. To be sure, there have always been the Churches, but folks get there only once a week and those of one denomination would not so frequently encounter with those of another denomination. But the movie house and the movies themselves have no denomination and have an appeal to everyone.

Theatre Seats Outnumber Population

Here is a curious fact about small communities and their movie houses. In some little towns there are more seats in the motion picture theatre than there are inhabitants in the village. In one mountain town in New York State the population is 597, and yet the two motion picture theatres have 1,100 seats. Of course they draw upon the surrounding territory, which is a prosperous farming region. Another New York State village has a population of 755 and its picture theatre seats 770. In these small places picture shows are given only two or three times a week, and on those occasions the streets for blocks in each direction from the motion picture house are filled with parked automobiles. No other occasion brings so many people into these communities—with a resultant flow of business to the stores—as "movie nights."

In many hundreds of small places the motion picture theatre is the handsomest building in town and is indeed a civic monument toward which the residents may point with pride. And this is as it should be. The motion pictures are the best-beloved form of entertainment that we Americans have and they deserve to be housed in a fitting way.

The Exhibitor's High Status

The time will come when the motion picture theatre owner—the man who provides this sort of entertainment for his fellow townsmen—will be regarded as of equal importance with the local editor, the librarian, possibly even the clergyman.

In other ways we do not frequently think of, pictures are constantly working for our betterment, even though we may be unconscious of

that fact. Take the matter of music. In New York City recently there was a so-called "memory contest." A popular band in the park played brief selections from one hundred different pieces and the audience noted down, as best it could remember, the names of these. A very surprising knowledge of good music was thus revealed when the score-sheets were looked over by the judges. One of these men was asked how he accounted for this fact. His answer was "the movies." As he pointed out, the orchestras or organs in the movie houses are heard by millions who previously perhaps never listened to good music. The names of the selections are printed on the programs in all picture houses and these have come to the knowledge of countless persons who otherwise would know little or nothing of this great form of art.

Pictures Encourage Reading

Take again the matter of reading. The American Library Association or indeed any librarian will tell you that the motion pictures have greatly increased the reading of good literature. Many motion picture plays are based upon novels and upon historical subjects with which the great mass of the public is not familiar. After the showing of these photoplays, invariably there are requests at the libraries for the book from which the film was made or for literature dealing in various ways with the particular period depicted upon the screen. So great is this demand on the part of those who wish to read the novels or histories which have been picturized that an enterprising firm of publishers are engaged almost entirely in making reprints of these books to be sold at popular prices.

The foregoing are but a few of the accomplishments of this new instrument of entertainment and enlightenment. The following is an editorial from the New York American in which the writer tells in a few words the story of motion pictures:

"Credits and Debits

"Motion pictures have opened to millions new vistas of knowledge and beauty.

"They have brought the glories of an Alpine sunset, the mysterious charm of the Orient, the cool feathery waterfall—the multitudinous wonders of nature into the drab lives of the tenement dweller, the factory worker.

"They have provided countless hours of laughter, of romance and adventure for a great class of Americans who are otherwise unable to afford the luxury of frequent entertainment.

"They have given surcease from toil, forgetfulness to the troubled heart, courage to the despairing.

"The motion picture has given opportunity to millions to see the work of great artists, to know many of the best actors and actresses of the generation; and it will preserve to posterity the histrionic art of this period.

"The motion picture industry has played a noble, generous part in every public charity. It has fed the orphan of every land, and during the war it was the Government's greatest propagandist.

"How insignificant are its offenses in the light of achievements!"

Its Kinship to Press and Speech

As a form of thought transmission, the motion picture has taken its rightful place beside the spoken and printed word. It is one of the three methods of expression by which human beings convey their thoughts to others. A new method, it is true, but even more effective than speech and the printed word, because the motion picture speaks a "universal language" understandable by all. A group of twenty people speaking twenty different languages may not be able to communicate and make each other understand, but the picture of a mother or of a child conveys the same meaning to all of them.

Pictures—The First Method of Expression

The birth of human thought transmission is as old perhaps as man himself. In the earliest days when men found that ideas could be expressed by voice and by signs and symbols, there came crudely into existence two forms of expression which have since prevailed, fundamentally without rival, until the advent of pictures in motion.

Even before languages were known, pictures and symbols were carved upon rock or inscribed in pigments to record the thought of men. The same mental suggestion that characterized the motion picture today brought into being those rough images made by prehistoric man, striving for utterance and finding it in pictured form.

And all through the ages the development of thought expression has been fought by obstructionists. In the light of later history we can well imagine the struggles of the primitive thinker, who sought to portray his ideas and ideals by means of images or stone or wood, or upon the dried skins of animals—how reactionary critics sought to discourage and balk his efforts.

Intolerance Burned the First Printing Press

Even in a later day they burned the first printing press because it was acclaimed by the intolerant and reactionary as an invention of the devil. The printing press prevailed, however, and marked a milestone in the march of civilization's progress. The coming of the motion picture as a means of universal transmission of thought was a second great milestone. But even with the final acceptance of the printing press, the progress of free thought expression was painful and slow. The agitation to muzzle and destroy this great medium for the development and enlightenment of mankind was persistent.

The Birth of Censorship

Out from that struggle to stifle freedom of expression there came the word "censorship"—a name which has a hateful sound to American ears, representing as it does the exercise of arbitrary and despotic repression by the few over the rights of many.

Six centuries of development has brought the press to its present firm position of stability. It was a laborious process. But things move more quickly in our day. The development of the motion picture began only twenty years ago.

It was around the great principle of a free press that the first historic censorship battle was fought—and won by those whose contention was that to muzzle the press was equivalent to blocking the wheels of progress and paralyzing the development of thought expression.

Screen Unknown When Constitutions Were Written

For hundreds of years exponents of liberty strove for the freedom of press and speech. When the Constitution of the United States was written two of the guarantees there given and under which we live today were freedom of the press and freedom of spech. When the Constitutions for each of the several states were written, there was guaranteed in each and every one, without exception, freedom of thought transmission in every form then known, to wit—freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

But since these Constitutions were enacted, and since these two forms of human expressions were guaranteed free forever, there has come into our lives another and kindred form, known as the motion picture. And the motion picture is nothing more or less than a new and later form of thought transmission. Its misfortune is that pictures in motion were unknown when our Constitutions were written. Had it then been known there is not the shadow of doubt that it would have been included in the constitutional guarantees of our nation and of each and every State.

Other Forms of Expression Will Develop

Very probably at some future day we may find mankind blessed with still another form of thought expression. The radio is already here as the latest development in transmission of sound. And we are about to see photography by radio from one part of the world to another made a practical thing. It is but another milestone in the march of civilization.

When freedom of the press was written into the Constitution of the States, it was not an action to foster and aid struggling newspapers, nor to promote the business enterprises of the nation's press. It was purely in the interest of public welfare, of free institutions and the resultant good which can exist only where freedom of expression is an established fact. Can any one successfully maintain the contention that the enactment of our constitutional guarantee of free speech and free press was a mistake?

Clamor to Reform Movies an Inheritance

The clamor in certain quarters for control, reform and censorship of the motion picture is an inheritance—a natural one, perhaps, in view of the close relationship of speech and press and pictures. But when the clamor of the few for throttling of the press and speech was quieted by the adoption of those constitutional provisions, the reactionaries of that day were obliged to cast about for other objects to attack. They found them here and there for many years.

But it was not until the motion picture took an important place in our daily life that the old hue and cry for "censorship" came again into its own—an echo of the very clamor that assailed free press and free speech so many years ago. There is no difference whatsoever in the principle involved.

News Reels an Animated Press

The so-called news reels are in all reality an animated press. They show the news of the day in moving pictures, telling the story of interesting happenings in a manner more easily assimilated than by the written word. They visualize current events throughout the world, showing real people and real scenes, impressing such news upon the mind and memory in a way unrivalled by any other means of thought conveyance. To an average of 50,000,000 persons in America alone these news reels are shown each week—a circulation greater than any four of the great chains of newspapers combined—and to these millions the news reels speak in a language easily understood and that claims and holds the attention—a world-wide language that needs no interpreting to old and young—a language that the eye knows and the mind readily follows.

Motion Picture Has Americanized the World

Through the motion picture American ideals, customs, styles and habits are shown and taught in every foreign land. It carries America's message throughout the world. And here at home, America's institutions and tradition are taught the immigrant—what America means, the obligations of citizenship, as well as the privileges and opportunities—all in a manner that cannot be misunderstood.

So has the motion picture taken its place as an active instrument beside the press and the spoken word in forming the great triumvirate of mediums for thought transmission. Had there been abuses of free press and free speech, without remedy, in the days preceding the making of our Constitutions, there is small likelihood that they would have been included among the individual rights defined therein.

So, too, with the motion picture. Its rapid and permanent growth in popular esteem could not have obtained had uncorrected abuses characterized its development. The public never errs in such matters. That which is good permanently prevails. That which is evil falls of its own weight in the light of public disfavor. The American public can always be trusted.

The Public Service of the Screen

Aside entirely from its entertainment features, the motion picture has performed and is performing a tremendous public service. During the world war, conservation in this country was made effective by the motion picture. In every city, town, and hamlet, the public was shown the necessity for conserving food and fuel and clothing—shown in a way the people could understand, via the motion picture screen. Recruiting was stimulated; the reason for it was shown—not in words but in motion pictures that left no room for doubt or argument. Great sums were raised through the medium of the screen for the Red Cross and other welfare organizations, both during and after the war.

A Splendid War Record

When America answered humanity's call and entered the war, it was not guns and powder and bullets that we first sent abroad. Early in our participation in that conflict, the President of the United States requested that representatives of the motion picture come to Washington for conference. He told them that many things could happen before America could send sufficient men and arms to Europe to bring the war to a close. The morale of the British and Italian and French forces was very low. Propaganda was being dropped into their lines telling the Allied soldiers that America was a commercial race, her people were not fighters; that America was not really in the war—we were not coming over; that our Declaration of War was all a bluff. He said we must let the Allies know in the front line trenches that we were coming—show them we were coming.

So the motion picture was the first ammunition we sent abroad—not airplanes, not guns, nor shells, **but the motion picture**—millions of feet of it, showing our great training camps, our airplanes, factories and flying fields, with thousands of men and soldiers in training and embarking for service abroad, five thousand Red Cross nurses marching down Fifth Avenue and many other great activities, photographed and quickly dispatched to the front. Their showing revived those men who had lost faith in the assurance that America would come in time. The Allied soldiers saw what we were doing, and they knew we were coming. It was more convincing than any assurance by the spoken or written word.

Usefulness at Home Equal to Service Abroad

The service performed at home by the motion picture during the World War was of an importance equal perhaps to its tremendous usefulness abroad. The picture theatres were kept open by Government decree. The motion picture was declared an essential industry. Diversion was a necessary thing. And the morale at home was upheld during that trying time by the motion picture just as it was in the front line trenches of Europe.

Such was the important work of the motion picture in the last war. Its Americanism was unquestioned; its usefulness tremendous. Seditious

utterances by several newspapers in this country caused their Americanism to be seriously questioned. But from the beginning of the war until its end not one American motion picture had the faintest taint of disloyalty. The screen's Americanism was one hundred per cent in every way. Its honesty of purpose as well as its achievements in connection with the War has never been questioned, even by its most adverse critics.

The Motion Picture as an Educator

The usefulness and influence of the motion picture covers indeed a wide range. In the class room, in churches, welfare organizations and in business it plays an increasingly important part. Educational fields are being developed wherein the pedagogic motion picture will be shown in several hundred thousand places, where its influence will be exerted with tremendous force in the training of our youth. The advantages of this method of visual training are now accepted generally. Six motion pictures will convey to a student more lasting knowledge of the history of the world than he or she can obtain in the entire course of the customary class room study.

But it is not alone in the class room that the educational phase of the motion picture is exerted. In the theatres themselves are shown pictures of foreign peoples and foreign lands, their customs and habits, their commercial enterprises, scenes of famous landscapes, cities; the romance of our own big industries, the manufacture of steel, the packing of beef, the preparation of our daily bread—all vastly interesting and instructive to both children and adults.

Another public service which the motion picture industry is performing is one that is not generally known about. Motion pictures are shown in many hundreds of institutions throughout the country—prisons, hospitals, orphan asylums, homes for the aged, institutions for the care of the insane, and other charitable institutions. Those in charge of such places declare unanimously that the effects of such showing are highly beneficial to the inmates and that "movie nights" are eagerly looked forward to by young and old, free and imprisoned.

It seems highly illogical, if not altogether absurd, for those who attack the motion pictures on the ground that "they teach crime to our children," to provide motion pictures as the sole means of entertainment for those who are held in custody because of crime.

Seeks Public Aid

The industry which makes and distributes and exhibits motion pictures is developing along proper lines. It fully realizes its responsibility to the public. Its standards are high and it is honestly endeavoring to keep them so—to raise them, in fact, each year, so that not only better and more interesting, more instructive and more artistic pictures may be produced, but that greater good may be accomplished for the public welfare.

To accomplish the development of its public welfare work in the fullest sense, the motion picture has sought the active co-operation and

support of the public itself and of those recognized agencies which are striving for accomplishment along similar lines. And such constructive co-operation has been forthcoming from many quarters. The Federation of Women's Clubs, The Boy Scouts, the Federal Council of Churches, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the Jewish Welfare Board, and many others of the great civic, religious and welfare organizations of this country belonging to the Committee on Public Relations, are exerting their influence in the further development of the motion picture as a powerful influence and instrument for good.

Some Criticism Has Been Deserved

There have been many things in the motion picture that can be criticised. There still are. Nothing is so perfect that it cannot be improved upon. But the fact remains that the objects of criticism are being rapidly removed. There is less to criticise in the picture of today than of even one year ago. And next year there will be even less than now.

In every walk of life, in every business or profession, there are individuals whose own reprehensible acts cast shadows over their worthy fellows. We have fake preachers, quack doctors, unethical lawyers.

But the church cannot be condemned because one or two clergymen run amuck. The medical profession cannot be damned because a few quack doctors are at large. Nor can the motion picture be justly held to account for the injudicious acts of some hair-brained individual whom accident has temporarily associated with it.

Unfair to Censure Many for Acts of One

Not long ago a young banker inherited a great fortune. He immediately played the fool, by loading up a house-boat with notorious women and sailed off to certain moral shipwreck. But there was no demand for suppression of banks.

We all recall the escapades of "Coal Oil Johnny"—how he bathed in champagne and hired an opera house for his own use, after a sudden fortune had come to him. There was no clamor for censorship of oil wells.

Nor is there any shouting for a censorship of the pulpit because a minister of the gospel falls from grace and shocks the public by some spectacularly injudicious act.

Is it then fair play to the motion picture that it be shouted against as a thing of evil because now and then an individual employed in the industry breaks away from everyday moorings and figures unpleasantly in the public prints?

Influence Upon Youth

Some of the film's most adverse critics have laid great stress upon the charge that pictures of a certain type might incite the young to crime. The same charge was laid at the door of dime novels some years ago.

A possibly well-meaning brick-thrower said recently that some screen stories are too much like the Nick Carter, Frank Read, Jr., and Diamond Dick novels of years ago. Many good citizens of the last generation read those thrillers. Some of their mothers whipped them systematically for doing so. It was not uncommon to hear Jules Verne referred to as "the champion liar of the world."

Those who have read Frank Read, Jr.'s dime novels will remember that one creation of his imagination that entertained the young, was a vehicle in which the hero "went West" to fight the Indians. He called it "the iron horse." The machine he drove in was of iron, had rubber wheels and ran by steam, and at the head of the horse was a pair of nostrils that emitted steam, and bullets were unable to pierce the sides of this "horse." When the hero was in a tight pinch, and the Indians had surrounded him, he pulled out a revolving rapid-fire, 1,000 shot gun and mowed the Indians down on all sides. Another of his imaginary machines was an invention by which he rose in the air when the Indians came to take him off, and flew away. All very imaginative, and, yet, did you ever stop to think that these machines were but the heralds of the modern automobile-tank and flying machine? The submarine was also anticipated in these "fictions."

"Thou Shalt Not" is Heard on Every Hand

The tendency today is to say "this is wrong" and "that is wrong," "this is forbidden," "don't do that," and "don't do this." But we still have some faith in the people of every commonwealth of this country. The people are pretty good judges of what they want and the public generally gets what it wants in this country.

The only thing akin to censorship that is fair and just and infallible is that form of approval or disapproval exerted by the public itself. This applies to books and stage and screen. It applies as well to food and clothing and to all things in life. It is the expression of the people themselves, not legislation, nor class dictation that determines that which is good and shall survive and that which is bad and shall die. The cry for "more boards and commissions to regulate human tastes" has had its day. The people will not pay the bill for these jobs for the "faithful."

Screen a Tremendous Power for Good

No good reason has yet been advanced, and never will, why the motion picture should not be accorded the same rights and privileges as its twin sisters—speech and press. The motion picture has never entered politics. But in the screen itself lies a potential Niagara whose tremendous force has been indicated to some small extent in the war work, welfare and humanitarian drives where its value as a moulder of public opinion was demonstrated so effectively. Most certainly we do not want this force controlled by political censor groups.

Censorship Never a Public Demand

There has never been a public demand for censorship of the motion pictures. It has come always from small groups. In several States, censorship laws have been enacted by the legislatures, upon the mistaken theory that the people themselves wanted such legislation. But it was not the public itself who clamored for such political control of the screen. It was in each instance a small group of well-intentioned, but misguided, persons who honestly believed that censorship was wise —persons who had not seriously studied the subject, but who were swept off their feet by professional agitators who see evil in all things and good in none. Their insistent demands for censorship were construed by legislators to be the voice of the people. But it was not. It was the voice of the small minority.

The Massachusetts Verdict

The truth of this was very recently demonstrated in Massachusetts. In 1921, the legislature of that State was induced to pass a censorship law. By petition it became a referendum matter and on November 7, 1922, the public of Massachusetts voted upon the question of whether or not the people desired a censorship of the motion picture. The people defeated the measure by a vote of 553,173 to 208,252, a majority of 344,921 against censorship.

It was the first time the public of any State had ever been given the opportunity to register its opinion on this important subject. Massachusetts is a conservative State. Its people are conservative people. They rejected censorship by a vote greater than that given to any candidate on the ticket or to any issue.

No Two Censors Can Agree

The impracticability of censorship has been clearly shown in the States in which it has been attempted. It has failed dismally wherever tried. With varying and conflicting standards the censors of one State will cut from a picture scenes which are approved by the censors of another State. No two minds are ever in full accord as to what is really good and what is really bad. I may think that blue or pink is the most attractive color. You may think that green is far prettier. Another prefers a shade of red—and so on, until all the colors of the rainbow and all the shades of color are picked by those who admire them most.

What chance, then, has the producer of a motion picture to create a truly great work of art if he must try to meet the divergent requirements of a host of censor boards, all differing in their views, yet each clothed with legal power to enforce their victims? He would have to be a human chameleon to do it. He would face an economic impossibility.

An Impossible Task-Master

Under censorship of motion pictures it would be impossible to produce a screen version of American history that would satisfy censorship requirements. A version of the Civil War, for instance, that might meet the approval of Northern censors would be rejected South of the Mason and Dixon Line. And vice versa. To some Alexander Hamilton was a hero, to others an arch villain.

The plays of Shakespeare would suffer like fate. In Hamlet, for instance, there are five murders. If a motion picture were ever made with five murders in it, even though its ideals were as beautiful and serene as those of Shakepeare's Hamlet, it would be attacked as a crime picture under censorship, and sent to the scrap heap.

When you consider the obstacles that have beset the path of the motion picture's progress, its tremendous growth and development in so short a time is no less than astounding. Harassed by varying standards of censorship, overburdened by regulatory laws and ordinances more numerous than in any other industry, hampered by the sharp-shooting of detractors by the thousand, the industry in two decades has taken its place among the greatest enterprises of this country.

No Time for Intolerance

There was never a time in the history of America when we needed more helpful co-operation, more smiles, more love, more sunshine, more laughter, more ambition, and more optimism, more happiness, and contentment in our social and business life. That is the creed of the motion picture. This is no time for gloom and pessimism, assassination of character, suspicion, hatred or intolerance. Such a creed is more appropriate for those who refuse to view many good things in life in the light of their achievement.

If there are still any real and serious ills to be corrected in connection with the motion picture they will be removed by public opinion, backed by an intelligent and earnest desire of the picture makers for improvement in every way.

MOTION PICTURES IN INSTITUTIONS

In several hundred institutions throughout the United States—penal, correctional, juvenile, charitable, etc.—motion pictures are shown regularly to the inmates and always with highly beneficial effects.

Following are extracts from statements made publicly by officials of some of those institutions:

Claude B. Sweezey, Warden, Maryland Penitentiary: "I know of nothing in the way of entertainment more suitable for institutional use than good moving pictures. I have seen pictures displayed in this institution where crime was portrayed and I have seen the honest person in the picture receive much more applause than the crook who was portrayed in the same picture. Men confined in institutions can appreciate honesty, squareness and uprightness of purpose, even though they may not have been imbued with those ideas when outside. In short, good pictures are good for persons in prison as well as those outside."

Dr. J. Percy Wade, Superintendent Spring Cove State Hospital (for the insane), Catonsville, Md.: "I know of no one thing that is more entertaining and more enjoyed than the moving pictures. They appeal to all types of mental disorders and the majority of the patients are able to follow the thread of the picture. It is a great benefit to the patients and hastens their recovery."

Dr. J. Clement Clark, Superintendent Springfield State Hospital, Sykesville, Md.: "Besides being instructive, a motion picture often directs the patient's manner of thinking and acting, causing him to forget and often to lose his delusions and thereby adds much to the recovery of the patient."

Leon C. Faulkner, Supt. Maryland Training School for Boys: "The films are a great help to the morale of the institution. Their educational advantages also cannot be overestimated in my judgment as the films carry the youngsters afar into many climes, countries and conditions of life."

Edward C. Bagley, Deputy Commissioner, Massachusetts Dept. of Correction, Boston: "To my mind the film has been one of the most wonderful mind-developers that could be adopted as an educational proposition for the inmates and they have surely enjoyed every picture that has been shown."

Dr. Eugene R. Kelly, Commissioner for Public Health for Massachusetts: "Moving pictures are used regularly in each of the four State Sanitoria. The general rule is to run a regular movie program twice a week. The Department has a very high regard for the value of moving pictures and can very well substantiate the language used in the report of the Russell Sage Foundation—'The industry has very uniformly looked upon the institution as a field for service rather than for profit and in so doing they have made a very significant contribution to the happiness of thousands of unfortunate individuals.'"

Charles A. Blaney, Chairman, Michigan State Prison Commission:

"I consider the films as we show them in our penal institutions one of the greatest movements for uplift that we have ever tried out."

Charles E. Vasaly, Supt. Minnesota State Reformatory, St. Cloud, Minn.: "We have found pictures in this institution very valuable as well as instructive. While the primary purpose to a large extent is recreational, nevertheless, I am convinced that there are great possibilities in the educational and vocational side of picture showing."

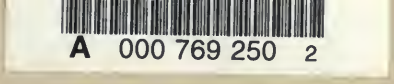
Elizabeth Purcell, Supt. Colorado State Industrial School for Girls: "We have a motion picture show here once a week. The common type of picture is most popular with our pupils and next come nature studies, current events and good, clean love stories. I strongly recommend the use of motion pictures in schools of this kind not only from the educational standpoint but also as a means of promoting good feeling and as an aid in discipline."

C. A. McGonagle, Supt. Indiana Boys' School, Plainfield, Ind.: "I regard the use of motion pictures in this institution as almost indispensible. Pictures of current events, comedy or good clean drama furnish splendid entertainment and are thoroughly enjoyed."

O. M. Pittenger, Supt. Indiana State School for the Deaf, Indianapolis, Ind.: "Perhaps no children enjoy motion pictures more and none profit more from them than do the deaf. They must depend largely on their sight for their education and the motion pictures makes a great appeal to them."

W. M. Louden, Supt. Indiana State Soldiers' Home, Lafayette, Ind.: "I am glad to say that we are meeting with much success in our picture shows and the old folks are delighted with them. Every Friday night you can see the old folks hobbling across the camp to the Assembly Hall. It is a real treat to them and the most enjoyment they have during the whole week."

C. Floyd Haviland, Chairman New York State Hospital Commission: "Motion pictures are used in all the State hospitals for mental disease. Motion pictures, in my opinion, constitute the most important single means of entertainment for mental patients. The influence of properly selected pictures is uniformly good and is distinctly curative in certain groups of patients."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